

Seeing Through Life



*With the National Society
for the Prevention of
Blindness for the Year 1928*

370 Seventh Avenue, New York, N. Y.

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Seeing Through Life

Fourteenth Annual Report
December, 1928

MR. GEORGE BLAGDEN, Treasurer

NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE
PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS

Date.....19...

370 Seventh Avenue, New York, N. Y.

I wish to contribute \$.....to the work of SAVING SIGHT.

Name.....

Address.....

This Society is a volunteer health organization supported entirely by contributions and membership dues.

Contributing Member . . \$2.00

Sustaining Member . . \$10.00-\$ 50.00

Subscribing Member . . 5.00

Associate Member . . 50.00- 100.00

Donations in any amount will be welcome. The Society is authorized by law to receive trust funds, legacies and bequests.

National Society for the Prevention of Blindness
370 Seventh Avenue
New York, N. Y.

THE *National Society for the Prevention
of Blindness* pays tribute to its directors:

Mrs. Seth Low, 1847-1929

James P. Munroe, 1862-1929

SAVE SIGHT THROUGH LIFE BY—

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PREVENTING EYE TROUBLES IN BABIES

AS in the years past, the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness has continued its campaign of reducing eye troubles in babies.

OPHTHALMIA NEONATORUM

Statistics received from the American Foundation for the Blind on new pupils in schools for the blind who are blind from ophthalmia neonatorum, indicate that the incidence for the year 1928 was 9.1 per cent, a reduction of almost 68 per cent in the past twenty years.

Following up the inquiry made in 1926 by the National Society in co-operation with the Committee on Conservation of Vision of the State and Provincial Health Authorities of North America on the present practices in health departments and in departments of obstetrics in hospitals and medical schools in regard to ophthalmia neonatorum, the Medical Director, who is Secretary of the Committee on Con-

Preventing Eye Troubles in Babies

servation of Vision, secured the following information: that all but 12 states and one territory supply free prophylactic solution either to midwives or to doctors or to both; that 30 states carry provision on birth certificates for reporting the use of a prophylactic in the eyes of the newborn; and finally, that 44 states and three territories have some provision, either by law or by health department regulation, requiring or urging the use of a prophylactic.

There is an increasing appreciation of the fact that about four of every ten birth infections of the eye that become a menace to vision are not gonorrheal in origin. The more general this knowledge becomes the easier it will be to secure the co-operation of mothers in insisting on the use of prophylactic drops at the birth of their children. Specific information was requested by seven states and a Canadian province on approved methods of preventing ophthalmia neonatorum.

SYPHILITIC INFECTIONS

It has been shown beyond a doubt that treatment of the syphilitic expectant mother in the first three months of pregnancy is a safe assurance of her bearing a healthy child free from syphilis or any of its ravaging effects. Since syphilis in the expectant mother or in the father is responsible for a large percentage of blindness occurring in infancy, childhood or even later in life, the necessity for promoting prenatal care in avoiding syphilitic blindness as well as blindness due to birth infection has been increasingly realized by the National Society and it is co-operating closely with the American Social Hygiene Association and with national public health nursing and social agencies in popularizing this information.

[7]



Prenatal care



CARING FOR THE EYES OF PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN

WHETHER eye defects can be ascertained in children before school age has been a question which has occupied the interest of the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness since 1925, when it inaugurated the first pre-school eye clinic in co-operation with the Clinton Neighborhood Conference, at Hartley House.

STUDY OF EYES OF PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN

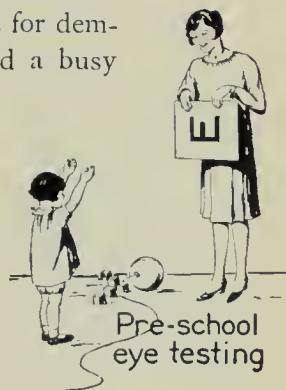
During 1928, in the study of the eyes of children below school age, 220 children had their eyes inspected. These children represent a good cross-section of urban childhood including almost every race and nationality. The co-operating organizations in New York City during the year 1928 were: College Settlement, Morning Star Mission, Olivet Memorial Kindergarten, and the Church of All Nations, grouped under the Lower East Side Community Council.

DEMONSTRATIONS OF PRE-SCHOOL EYE TESTING

Requests for demonstrations were so great during 1928 that the services of one full-time and one part-time nurse were required. During the year 38 communities in 18 states were given demonstrations, making for the two-year period since the demonstrations began a total of 156 demonstrations, and reaching thousands of key people in public health and educational fields. During the 1928 Annual Conference a demonstration was given of how pre-school eye testing can be accomplished even with seriously handicapped children. Through the co-operation of Public School 47 of the New York City Department of Education the vision of several deaf kindergarten pupils was tested before a large and interested audience, including school, nursing and health officials from many localities.*

So widespread also was the interest in pre-school testing that it seemed advisable for the National Society to have drawn and printed a Symbol E Chart, according to the Snellen Scale, to be used with special directions, for testing the eyes of pre-school children. In addition, the publication of a special pamphlet on the method, together with an introduction and conclusion by Dr. Edward Jackson, had wide circulation and aroused added interest in pre-school eye testing. Expressions for the need of this work are indicating how widespread the field is. Requests for demonstrations from many states already portend a busy year for 1929.

* A description of the procedure is given in the Proceedings of the 1928 Annual Conference of the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness, November 16-28, 1928.





CONSERVING THE SIGHT OF SCHOOL CHILDREN

ACTIVITIES of the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness in conserving the sight of school children during 1928 covered a wide range, including the further development of sight-saving class work.

WORK AMONG SCHOOL CHILDREN

The publication of a letter eye test chart drawn according to the Snellen Scale resulted in a wide sale at cost among school and health authorities. In addition, this Society published a new and revised edition of *Conserving the Sight of School Children*, prepared under the direction of Dr. Thomas B. Wood, who is chairman of the Joint Committee of the American Medical Association and the National Education Association. So great has been the demand for this publication that the entire edition of 2,000 copies was exhausted within a year. A significant event during the year

was the joint program of the American Association of School Physicians with this Society during its 1928 Annual Conference, at which many prominent school and health authorities made contributions.*

SIGHT-SAVING CLASS WORK

The number of sight-saving classes in the United States has grown from 292 in 1927 to 305 in 1928, with the prospect of the establishment of several more at an early date. While the increase in the number of sight-saving classes is steadily growing, it is not to be forgotten that according to statistical calculation 4,700 more classes are needed. More and more, the need for specially trained teachers is being felt. To meet this need, the number of courses for the training of sight-saving class teachers and supervisors is increasing. During the summer of 1928, two regular courses were conducted in co-operation with the National Society: at the University of Southern California and the University of Cincinnati. In addition, an advanced course was given at Chicago University. Courses were independently given during the school year at several other educational institutions. Indications for 1929 promise a course at Teachers College, Columbia University, for the Spring and for the Summer Sessions, as well as a continuation of Summer Courses at the institutions mentioned above. "Sight-Saving Classes,—Past, Present, and Future,"† was the subject of several meetings during the Annual Conference.

* For details see *Proceedings* of the 1928 Annual Conference of the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness, November 26–28, 1928.

† For complete report see *The Sight-Saving Class Exchange* for December, 1928.



SEEING THROUGH LIFE

Cleanliness and care
Periodic eye examination
Adequate medical attention
Adequate and proper lighting

Pre



Sight-saving
classes



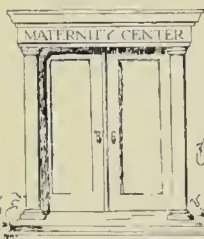
Conserving
the sight of
school children



Prevention of
eye accidents
in play



Pre-school
eye testing



Prenatal care



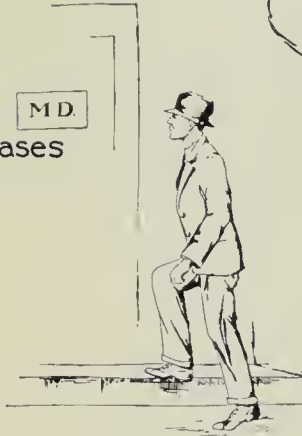
Drops to prevent
"babies' sore eyes"

Guarding
against
eye troubles
in mid-life
and later



Prevention and cure
of venereal diseases

M.D.



Safe-guarding
sight in industry



Good habits
of eye care

NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE
PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS
370 Seventh Avenue , New York



CONSERVING THE SIGHT OF THE WORKER

DURING 1928, activities of the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness in conserving the sight of working men and women have allied it with a number of national agencies.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

The National Society undertook, during 1928, to plan a co-operative educational campaign with the American Federation of Labor, through which 5,000,000 persons will be reached through newspapers, magazines, lectures and exhibits. Arrangements have been made for staff members of the National Society to address the conventions of state Federations of Labor and of Central Labor Trade Councils in the larger industrial centers. A series of pamphlets on safe practices in the major crafts is planned as a project of the National Society and the American Federation of Labor.

Conserving the Sight of the Worker

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF INDUSTRIAL PHYSICIANS

Eyesight in industry occupied an important place in the discussion of the National Society during its Annual Conference, when it co-operated with the American Association of Industrial Physicians and Surgeons, in presenting the various aspects of eye hazards in industry and the place of proper lighting and equipment in preventing not only eye accidents but the development of defective vision.*

PARTICIPATION IN COLLEGE COURSE

The Society again co-operated with New York University in presenting the facts of eye hazards in industry to students taking the University's course for the training of industrial safety engineers and public safety directors.

STUDY OF EYES SAVED IN INDUSTRY

Through a questionnaire addressed to industrial plants, the National Society together with the National Safety Council endeavored to ascertain for the first time the instances in which eyes have been saved in industry through the use of mechanical safety devices. The experience of 583 industrial plants employing more than 578,000 men and women, during the years 1926 and 1927, indicates that in the two-year period 2,757 men and women were saved from serious injury or total blindness in both eyes, and 4,654 were saved from serious injury or total blindness in one eye.†

* For details, see *Proceedings of the 1928 Annual Conference*.

† Detailed information regarding this study will be available in report form early in 1929.



Safe-guarding
sight in industry



PREVENTING EYE TROUBLES IN MID-LIFE AND LATER

THE best way to prevent eye troubles, especially in middle age or later, is to have periodic eye examinations.

Presbyopia, glaucoma, and cataract are the three main eye troubles of mid-life and old age. The general educational campaign of the National Society includes the broadcasting of the necessity for increased attention to eye examinations after mid-life. Not only was "Eye Troubles in Mid-Life and Later" the subject of a radio talk reaching many people, but a publication under the same title had wide circulation. An entire edition of 2,000 copies of the National Society's publication, "Eye Troubles in Mid-life and Later," was exhausted and had to be reprinted because of additional demands. Further, the publication was considered so useful that the New York State Commission for the Blind, in its Prevention of Blindness Department, requested the right to reprint it for special distribution throughout the state.

Preventing Eye Troubles in Mid-Life and Later

GLAUCOMA

Realizing that probably one-third of all blindness occurring in the latter half of life is due to glaucoma, the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness, in co-operation with the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary, through the teaching department of Harvard University Medical School, undertook, during 1928, to sponsor a study on the reduction of blindness from glaucoma through providing adequate follow-up of cases of glaucoma. The report from the medical social worker of the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary for a half-year period of the study indicated that in that time 126 new patients were admitted; that the average number of patients in clinic each month was 151; and that the average number of clinic visits per month was 191. The report for the half-year period divided the patients into four groups: (1) intelligent, co-operative patients able to afford treatment, who require only that appointments be assigned them; (2) co-operative patients who require, aside from clinic appointments, additional help, such as free admission and medicine, assistance in transportation, etc.; (3) patients failing to co-operate because of ignorance, who need to be educated by the medical social worker; and (4) working people still having good vision, for whom the social worker makes special arrangements to avoid loss of jobs. The National Society for the Prevention of Blindness hopes on the completion of the study to publish a report which will indicate the improved control of glaucoma through adequate social follow-up, which will serve as a model for other eye dispensaries and hospitals to inaugurate in an effort to reduce the incidence of blindness due to glaucoma.

Guarding
against
eye troubles
in mid-life
and later





PUBLIC EDUCATION

WITH the ever-broadening advances of the National Society's work, the demands for its educational material, as well as the demands upon the time of staff members for lectures, have grown in proportion.

PUBLICATIONS

During the year, almost 900,000 pieces of literature were circulated, of which 11,005 were sold at cost, and the rest distributed free of charge. In addition to the regular appearance of the *News Letter*, the *Sight-Saving Class Exchange*, and the *Junior News Letter* the National Society issued fifteen new publications, besides a number of special reprints from other publications. The publication of the Symbol E and the Letter Charts by the National Society resulted in a wide sale at cost of both these charts—more than 2,400 within the first few months of their appearance—and a con-

tinuous demand for these is being felt. The new edition of *Conserving the Sight of School Children* has been so popular that a complete edition of 2,000 was exhausted during the year.

EXHIBITS

During the year twenty-one exhibits were loaned by the National Society, as compared with thirteen loaned the previous year. In addition, several communities requested the privilege of reproducing exhibit material for their own use in spreading the message of sight conservation.

LECTURES

The demand for radio talks increased from six in 1927 to fourteen in 1928. In addition, 360 lectures were given throughout the year.

PUBLICITY

The Society has for a number of years conducted an aggressive, but discriminating, publicity campaign through which it has sought to acquaint the public at large and certain special groups, such as industrial executives, teachers, and social workers, with the principal causes of blindness and the best known means of their elimination. Newspapers, magazines, trade journals, and many other types of periodicals have co-operated with the Society in this endeavor. Material has been offered for publication only when there has been the definite need of or opportunity for bringing the facts concerning the hazards to sight and methods of safeguarding the eyes to a large part of the community. The Society has also had frequent occasion during the year to co-operate with and assist various local communities in their publicity and public education activities.

CO-OPERATION



CO - O P E R A T I O N

PERHAPS the greatest achievement of the National Society has been the development of thoroughly co-operative relationship with many national as well as local voluntary and official organizations whose work in some phase has a relationship to the prevention of blindness. In all its services the National Society strives to co-ordinate its work with those agencies especially interested, and that it has the wholehearted endorsement and co-operation of more than 400 agencies in the United States and abroad is an indication of its worth.

During 1928 the National Society has undertaken two new projects involving joint efforts. With the League of Red Cross Societies, the National Society undertook a study of international aspects of prevention of blindness, the report of which will be published in 1929 in English and in French by the League of Red Cross Societies. The second project is an extensive co-operative educational campaign with the American Federation of Labor to reach 5,000,000 families of working men and women. In addition, it has continued its past co-operative relationships with scores of local and national agencies, realizing that the gospel of prevention of blindness must actually permeate the atmosphere in order that the responsibility of the citizen, the parent, the teacher, the doctor, the nurse, the illuminating engineer, the safety engineer, the worker, and the employer, all take their responsibility to prevent blindness and save sight.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR 1928

RECEIPTS

Donations	\$118,019.51	
Memberships	26,860.90	
Interest on Investments	3,562.50	
Interest on Bank Balances	1,553.41	
Sale of Publications	881.16	
Refunds and other Receipts	126.85	
<i>Total Revenue Receipts</i>	\$151,004.33	
Proceeds—\$5,000 U. S. Liberty Loan 3rd 4¼% bonds redeemed	5,000.00	
TOTAL RECEIPTS		\$156,004.33
Cash on hand December 31, 1927		54,562.29
		<u>\$210,566.62</u>

BUDGET DISBURSEMENTS

Preventing Eye Troubles in Babies . . .	\$8,788.79	
Caring for Eyes of Pre-school Children	10,754.29	
Conserving the Sight of School Chil- dren	12,360.44	
Conserving the Sight of the Worker . .	7,080.40	
Trachoma (Children and Adults) . . .	5,118.35	
Study of Glaucoma	1,333.31	
Literature and other Propaganda . . .	15,386.75	
Correspondence	8,695.76	
Publications and their Distribution . .	11,848.98	
Membership	19,924.38	
Office Expense	18,004.43	
Furniture and Equipment	1,403.55	
Rent	7,200.62	
Annual Meetings and Special Con- ference	1,361.66	
<i>Total Disbursements for 1928 Budget</i>	\$129,261.71*	
Investments, Emergency Fund	40,000.00	
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS		\$169,261.71
Advances on 1929 Budget and other 1929 items . .	1,188.85†	
Cash on hand December 31, 1928	40,116.06	
		<u>\$210,566.62</u>

* † See footnotes on page 23.

Financial Statement for 1928

There is a Fund of \$112,000 which is made up of Legacies, Special Gifts and a Fund for Emergency, of which the following Legacy Fund is a part:

LEGACY FUND

<i>Date</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Amount</i>
September 1922	Mrs. Nellie E. McClanahan,	Omaha, Nebr. . .	\$200
January 1926	Mr. Louis S. Stroock,	New York, N. Y. .	250
January 1927	Mr. Solomon A. Fatman,	New York, N. Y. .	2,000
November 1927	Miss Marion L. Alexander,	Port Chester, N. Y.	500
December 1928	Miss Ella T. Brundrett,	New York, N. Y. .	1,000
			<hr/> \$3,950

AUDIT

The Executive Committee requires a semi-annual audit of its books. For the year ending December 31, 1928, this complete audit was made by Frederick Fischer, Jr. A copy of this Audit will be sent, upon request, to any one wishing to make a further examination of the Society's financial operations.

* This sum of \$129,261.71 was regularly budgeted to the Managing Director by the Executive Committee, and was expended solely for items appearing in the annual and monthly budgets. All expenditures are made on a modern annual and monthly budget system. The Managing Director is required by the Executive Committee to submit a detailed statement of proposed expenditures and to account carefully for expenditures made under budget limitations. Proper vouchers are on file for every expenditure.

† The pressing demands upon the Society for its various national services require that there shall be maintained a balance sufficient to meet regular and special expenses for a number of months in advance. The major portion of the two balances given above, \$54,562.29, on hand December 31, 1927, and \$40,116.06, on hand December 31, 1928, was carried over for this purpose. In this way the Society endeavors to safeguard its work each year during the months of June, July, August and September, when contributions from members and donors are necessarily small and demands for services are large.

Form of Bequest

I give and bequeath to the NATIONAL
SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF BLIND-
NESS, INC., a corporation created under
the laws of the State of New York, the
sum of Dollars
for its corporate purposes.

National Society for the Prevention of Blindness, Inc.

370 Seventh Avenue, New York, N. Y.

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